UNESCO


and

13th QUADRENNIAL AND STATUTORY REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF NATIONAL COMMISSIONS FOR UNESCO OF THE ASIA AND PACIFIC

Wellington, New Zealand 23 – 27 May 2004

Final Report

INTRODUCTION

Sunday, 23 May 2004 – Opening Ceremony

The conference commenced with a Powhiri, the official ceremony conducted at the Te Papa marae. Participants were welcomed by Regional Tribal Elders and Staff on behalf of Te Papa, the New Zealand National Museum. For UNESCO, John Mohi of Communications sub-Commission of the New Zealand National Commission and Mr Hans d’Orville, Director, Bureau of Strategic Planning, Representative of the Director General, delivered a reply thanking Te Papa for graciously hosting the forthcoming conferences.

The Official Opening was carried out by the Honourable Margaret Austin, Chairperson of the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO. The other speakers were Keri Kaa, a member of the Culture sub-Commission of the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO, Edna Tait, Director of the UNESCO Office in Apia, Hasnah Gasim, National Coordinator for ASPnet in the Indonesian National Commission, Alisher Ikramov, Secretary-General, Uzbekistan National Commission, Mary-Louise Kearney, Director of the Division of Relations with National Commissions and New Partnerships, UNESCO Paris. A special message of greeting to the ASPAC National Commissions was delivered on video by the Director-General, Koichiro Matsuurra that was followed by a keynote speech by the Honourable Marian Hobbs, Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs and Education (New Zealand). In her remarks, Ms Hobbs emphasized the relevance and importance of UNESCO activities in today’s globalized world. The New Zealand government, a founding member of UNESCO in 1946 and a strong supporter of the Organization’s ideals and objectives, was pleased to host the Regional Consultation on the Draft 33 C/5 and complemented the National Commissions for having chosen challenging themes for their 13th Quadrennial and Statutory Conference.

Following this, the Provisional Rules of Procedure were adopted, after which the Bureau was elected, with the following results:

Chair
Margaret Austin (New Zealand)

Vice-Chairs
Arief Rachman (Indonesia)
Alisher Ikramov (Uzbekistan)

Rapporteurs
Regional Consultation 33 C/5
Lucy Moala-Mafi (Tonga)

Drafting Committee
Ian Anderson (Australia)
Hiroshi Nagano (Japan)
Tupae Esera (Samoa)

Quadrennial Conference
C. Balakrishnan (India)

New Zealand National Commission Secretariat Staff
Commission Secretariat Staff
Paris Secretariat Staff
Co-Rapporteurs

Regional Consultation 33 C/5
Myra Moeka’a (Cook Islands)
Hyun-Mook Lim (Republic of Korea)

Quadrennial Conference
Isireli Senibulu (Fiji)
Satya Bahadur Shrestha (Nepal)

The National Commissions approved the Provisional Agenda and Timetable and the Rules of Procedure. They then proceeded to an overview of the process leading to the preparation of the UNESCO Draft Programme and Budget for 2006-2007 (Document 33 C/5), presented by Mr Hans d’Orville, Director, Bureau of Strategic Planning of UNESCO and representative of the Director-General.

This document contains two sections:

1. A report on the Draft 33 C/5

2. A report on the discussions with regard to the 13th Quadrennial and Statutory Regional Conference of National Commission for UNESCO of the Asia and Pacific Region.
Opening of the 13th Quadrennial Conference

1. The Honourable Margaret Austin opened the meeting and expressed the hope that the delegations of the Asia and Pacific region and UNESCO were enjoying their stay in New Zealand. The Chairperson said she was very happy that almost all the countries of the region were present at these meetings.

2. She pointed out that the topics of the Quadrennial Conference had been chosen by consensus amongst the National Commissions, which were members of the Steering Committee. Their inspiration for the overall theme of the Quadrennial and Statutory Conference had come from many sources, including the UN Millennium Development Goals, the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development for which UNESCO is the lead agency, the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). Also important were the Round Table reports from the 32nd session of the General Conference (2003) on Quality Education and Towards Knowledge Societies. The Steering Committee reasoned that if the world is to overcome poverty, realize gender equality, promote health, engage in environmental conservation, transform rural communities and ensure that people everywhere achieve social and economic satisfaction, then we need to respond to the challenges of the present age in a very constructive way. The fundamentals are respect by leaders for human rights, cultural and biological diversity and access to communication technologies.

3. At the beginning of the 21st Century, UNESCO faces the awesome challenge of leading its Member States progressively towards political inclusiveness and quality of life. Achieving these noble ends begins with knowledge, uses all the means possible for communication and real dialogue and provides the opportunity for people to use their talents and to be creative.

4. This thinking led to the overall theme Beyond Information and Knowledge Societies – Towards Creative Communities: The Role of UNESCO with the first session devoted to Education for Sustainable Development where the intention was to inform and inspire in order to innovate. The second session considered Information Societies and ways in which these can make a difference. The third session was an Open Forum on Sustainability and Creativity. UNESCO has said that “education is part of the problem but essential to the solution” and there is a wise old African Saying that “fear and uncertainty melt away before knowledge.”. To inspire creative communities in the 21st Century, it will be essential to bring knowledge and information together.

5. The Conference would engage in debate, put forward ideas based on country experiences, respond to challenges and use the opportunity to arrive at a set of recommendations which would constitute the ASPAC vision for the future.

Report on Tashkent – Review of Progress on Tashkent Recommendations

6. A progress report on the implementation of the Recommendations of the 12th Quadrennial and Statutory Regional Conference of the National Commissions of Asia and the Pacific was presented by Mr Alisher Ikramov (Secretary-General of the Uzbekistan National Commission for UNESCO). It was noted that major
recommendations are well advanced and this is benefiting National Commissions in carrying out their roles and mandate. The comparative advantage of National Commissions as the constitutional partners of UNESCO in the preparation, coordination, implementation and evaluation of the Organization's programmes, was once again outlined. In particular, the advisory activities of National Commissions vis-à-vis UN agencies, other international and local stakeholders, were emphasized. During the last four years, a number of new cooperation modalities among National Commissions, and between National Commissions and UNESCO's Secretariat (including UNESCO Field Offices) were elaborated, such as: the publication of *The Architecture of National Commissions*, reading access to the planning system SISTER, development of computer networking among National Commissions, as well as guidelines on cooperation between National Commissions and UNESCO Field Offices. Visibility of UNESCO in Member States was achieved through various activities of National Commissions, including the celebration of UNESCO's special days, years and decades, and anniversaries. It was pointed out that National Commissions could set up close links of collaborations with UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors, who function directly under the Director-General. Despite the current internal managerial problems of the World Federation of UNESCO Clubs, Centres and Associations, the continuation of collaboration with local clubs, within UNESCO's fields of competence, was supported. Participants were informed of the recent decision taken at the 169th session of the Executive Board with regard to this NGO. In order to provide better support for the capacity-building and cooperation activities of National Commissions, it was proposed to increase by about 50% the regular budget allocations and human resources of the Division of Relations with National Commissions and New Partnerships in the UNESCO Secretariat.

**Special Presentation on the BAM earthquake**

7. At the invitation of the Chairperson, Ms Junko Taniguchi from the UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office made a special presentation on the devastation wrought by the earthquake in Bam, I.R. of Iran on 26 December 2003. Through images depicting the extent of the damage, comparing Bam before and after the earthquake, Ms Taniguchi described the efforts being made by the Iranian authorities with the assistance of UNESCO, especially in the fields of Culture, Education, and Science. Information was presented on the work being undertaken in close collaboration with the other UN and IGO agencies, thus richly demonstrating the ongoing challenges which face the Iranian authorities and the international community as they cooperate to find sustainable solutions to this major natural disaster.

8. The theme for the Quadrennial Conference was outlined by the Chair, the Honourable Margaret Austin and the featured panelists were requested to make their presentations. These were aimed at setting the tone for the discussions and to link the various issues involved in Education for Sustainable Development.

**Session I  Education for Sustainable Development: Information, Innovation, Inspiration**

**Keynote addresses**

- Education for Sustainable Development - Professor A.H. Zakri, Director, Institute of Advanced Studies, United Nations University

"Education for Sustainable Development means what it says."

9. Professor Zakri presented a global perspective on education for sustainable development. *Agenda 21 of the 1992 Earth Summit* recognized the important role of education. A debate at the *World Conference on Higher Education* in
1998 was the first major step in uniting educators as a stakeholder group leading to the adoption of the Decade by the UN General Assembly in December 2002. The Ubuntu Declaration signed by 11 of the world’s foremost educational and scientific organizations during the WSSD strives to ensure that educators at all levels, media scientific researchers and government work closely to foster education for sustainable development at all levels and in all sectors.

10. Regional Centres of Excellence (RCEs) which can be thought of as spaces designed in order to strengthen the collaboration for ESD between regional and local actors, are the key strategy in the UNU’s programme to promote the Decade. The UNU will encourage the development of a network of RCEs through the development of tool kits to support RCEs to develop effective ESD curricula through various schemes to provide incentives such as an excellence award scheme and through the development of case studies that illustrate innovative success stories.

11. Education for Sustainable Development – Nick Potter, Office of the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment, New Zealand

“Never lose a holy curiosity; keep learning to see the world anew” Albert Einstein

12. This speaker presented a think-piece entitled ‘See Change' outlining the challenges for sustainability in the New Zealand context. This highlighted the shift in perception and understanding that was needed among people and organisations in society, in terms of the ways they look at complex issues and search for solutions, which will effect meaningful and sustainable change. Key points raised were as follows:

- There was a need to critically assess present patterns of human consumption since current levels seriously endanger the sustainability of available resources.
- Education remains the most effective means for confronting the challenges of the future.
- Society has a responsibility to see that advertising, which has a strong impact on young minds, does not exploit normal child development.
- Although individual human action can be effective, it is large-scale cooperative efforts that constitute a genuinely powerful instrument for change.

13. In the future, solutions cannot be found by following the same level of thinking as in previous eras. Major areas of focus will be the assuring of the quality of life, using a systems approach to problem-solving, developing capacity to educate for sustainability (known as EFS capacity), learning across the generations, social marketing and responsiveness to cultural diversity.

Country Presentations

- Environmental Education and Research in ASPAC: Hiroshi Nagano, Japanese National Commission for UNESCO

“Consider changing the lifestyle in developed countries”

14. The presentation covered the Fulbright Master Teacher Programme in which selected schools in Japan were engaged with partner schools in the USA in an exchange programme with a special focus on biodiversity. The programme ‘Biodiversity Understanding Global Societies’ (BUGS) was one in which students, teachers and selected museum staff took part largely through the video conferencing mode over a period of 6 months. Field trips were undertaken to collect various species of insects, which were then studied, and the reports were placed on the web for wider access.
• World Heritage in Young Hands: Hayden Montgomerie, New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO

“Students must sustain local, national and regional heritage in and for their region”

15. Mr. Montgomerie gave a presentation of the Pacific version of the original UNESCO kit: World Heritage in Young Hands which had been developed by New Zealand, drawing on material contributed by Member States of the Pacific sub-region.

16. This resource takes an innovative educational approach to developing students’ awareness of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and promotes the Pacific perspective on heritage and our value systems. Throughout the Pacific, the places of special value often have both natural and cultural significance. These linked values are commonplace and the separation into natural and cultural seems artificial.

17. The project involves students in sustaining local heritage in sub-regional and international contexts.

• Uzbekistan

“Enjoy learning!”

18. The presentation on Lifelong Learning and Non-Formal Education in Uzbekistan highlighted the action taken to realise the goals of the Dakar Framework of Action. The following were the highlights of the presentation:

19. Uzbekistan is a country in transition with the new education policy adopted in 1997, which provides for 12 years compulsory education (9 years of traditional education and 3 years of vocational education) aimed at 100% coverage of all eligible children.

• NFE, though not based on national educational standards, is based on local needs, involving partnership with the private sector and NGOs and promoting work oriented education for the private and informal sectors.

• Efforts to build a knowledge society encourage people to start engaging sooner rather than later.

• Various short-term learning opportunities to cater for diversity in the economy are available.

• There are flexible mechanisms for the recognition of qualifications along with professional networking amongst different creative centres.

• Cooperation with UNESCO was highlighted through Community Learning Centres within ASPnet schools, Community Multimedia Centres in rural areas, Community Learning Centres on Handicrafts in the historical heritage centres and Youth Summer Education camps.

• Repositioning for Self-Determination – Prof. Russell Bishop, University of Waikato, New Zealand

“Quality education promotes the self-determination and agency of all participants no matter what age or position”

20. Prof. Bishop described the outcome of his research based on three case studies: schooling of Navaho children in Southern Utah, mainstream schooling for Maori children in New Zealand, and schooling for Bedouin children in the Negev Desert of Israel.
21. Two major challenges face today’s teachers-cultural diversity and disparities. Bottom up education is the most effective. A fundamental methodology shift is required in the role of teachers away from their role as transmitters of knowledge to a new role as a co-learner, engaging with learners and focused on learning.


“Teach our youth we can make it on one planet if we share”

22. The definition of sustainable development is currently changing to include the human dimension as well as environmental and economic considerations. In this regard, the brain drain is a potent force with both positive and negative impact in the Asia and Pacific region in terms of retaining essential human resources whose skills underpin innovative research and problem solving.

23. A number of measures can be taken to address this, inter alia:

- Convention on Recognition of Higher Education Diplomas and Degrees
- Capacity-building of national higher education institutions
- Training in situ
- Use of ICTs
- Providing tax incentives
- Scholarship schemes
- Migration policies

24. Such measures would certainly help to strengthen the capacity, which is required to address the growing challenges of sustainable development in the region.

- Values Education – Education for International Understanding:
  Mr Seung Hwan Lee, Republic of Korea National Commission for UNESCO

“Without genuine international understanding, it is impossible to attain the noble goal of Sustainable Development”

25. The presentation was on Values Education and Education for International Understanding in the Asia and Pacific Region in the context of ESD. The highlights were:

- For a globally sustainable society, international commitment and shared understanding on the pressing need for a new moral and collective responsibility for future generations.
- ‘Diversity’ is one of the most remarkable qualities of the ASPAC region, with an extraordinary mix of diverse ethnic groups, languages, traditions and cultures.
- Most ASPAC countries have experienced ‘imperial colonialism’ at some stage and the root of many current problems is the ‘divide and rule’ policy followed by the colonial powers.
- In addition to security concerns, many countries in the ASPAC region face social problems including illiteracy, poverty and deprivation.
- Among UNESCO's regional groups, only the ASPAC region launched a values education programme (APNIEVE) in 1995 and the Asia/Pacific Centre for Education for International Understanding (APCEIU) in 2000 with a substantial contribution from the Republic of Korea.
- The response of the Asian countries to globalisation is tempered by its impact, both positive and negative, on diversity, which will affect our collective future. Hence the importance of the mission of Education for International Understanding.
26. The ensuing exchange of views highlighted the following issues:

- Sustainable development encompasses all sectors of life
- The importance of local and indigenous knowledge
- Empowerment, inclusiveness, transparency and democracy are key factors in sustainable development
- ESD and EFA are two sides of the same coin
- ESD needs to begin with early childhood education.

**Concluding Statement on the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development - ESD**

27. The following statement was offered by the Australian Delegation to the Conference. It was endorsed by the participants for its content, emphasis on key points related to ESD and general recommendations to UNESCO for its further action in this area.

28. “At the commencement of the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development, there is a unique opportunity to integrate the various social, cultural, ecological and economic dimensions of sustainable development, by drawing together the activities of the various related UN decades, namely:

- The UN Decade for a Culture of Peace and non-violence for the children of the world
- The UN Decade on Human Rights Education
- The UN Literacy Decade together with the Dakar and Millennium Development Goals.

29. We strongly urge UNESCO to bring together the bodies of knowledge and the experts who usually meet separately from the diverse fields of:

- Peace, intercultural and inter religious understanding,
- Social Justice, Equity and Human Rights,
- Environmental/Ecological/Future-oriented Education for Sustainability,
- Ethics in the Sciences,
- Other related fields (e.g., Civics).

and to adopt models, which are, based on a systems-oriented approach for the development of an organic, holistic, integrated, interdisciplinary and intersectoral approach to ESD from the very outset of the UN Decade.

30. In the context of limited resources, UNESCO may then synthesize and cross-fertilise the very best that is known in each of these fields to facilitate practical and achievable implementation of programmes in Member States.”

**Wednesday 26 May 2004**

**Session Two – Information Societies: Making a Difference**

31. Laurence Zwimpfer, * Deputy Chair and Communications specialist of the New Zealand National Commission, introduced the session, focusing on the four key UNESCO principles presented to the World Summit on Information Society (WSIS) in Geneva: freedom of expression; universal access to information and knowledge; access to quality education for all; and cultural and linguistic diversity.

**Keynote Address**

- UNESCO follow up to the World Summit on the Information Society, WSIS: * Axel Plathe, Senior Programme Specialist, Communication Sector, UNESCO
32. Recalling that the key message of the WSIS is the construction of knowledge societies, Mr Plathe presented the aims for the two phases of this initiative, namely Geneva (2003) and Tunis (2005). He then outlined the outcomes of the Geneva phase, including key principles and action plan points. Seventy-five of the 150 action points are in UNESCO’s specific mandate. Mr Plathe also described the preparations for the activities and tools, both from UNESCO and from external sources, which will be used in the lead-up to the Tunis phase. He concluded with an overview of the WSIS work that will continue beyond the Tunis summit. This will focus on: promoting an information culture, digital solidarity, ways to enhance the management of the Internet, and then optimal use of ICTs for achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

33. His presentation was followed by case studies from participants. These focused on the four key UNESCO principles presented to the WSIS in Geneva.

*Country and Other Presentations*

**Freedom of Expression**

34. Freedom of Expression: Lance Polu, President of the Pacific Islands News Association (PINA), Samoa

35. This speaker made a presentation on the role of his organisation on freedom of expression in the Pacific. He discussed the objectives of the Association, which promotes and defends the access to information, freedom of expression, the promotion and development of professional skills and standards in the region and the encouragement of professional co-operation and solidarity.

36. Defending media freedom from legislative and direct attacks on journalists is a key role of PINA, which works closely with the International Freedom of Expression Exchange (IFEX). Another key issue for the Pacific and of interest for PINA is the preservation of cultures and languages. Mr Polu commented on the importance of the work of UNESCO in all these areas and expressed the wish to further develop the working relationship already established for projects such as the WSIS.

37. Press freedom and legislation: Arief Rachman, Executive Secretary of the Indonesia National Commission

38. Discussing these issues in Indonesia, Mr Rachman articulated the unique challenges presented by a country with a population of 220 million spread over 100 islands and speaking 580 languages. In 1998, a law was passed to protect freedom of expression as a human right, which was a principle of the Constitution of Indonesia adopted in 1945. The speaker outlined five areas which could be obstacles to the promotion of freedom of expression, namely:

39. • The cultural problems of a paternalistic society
  • Face to face or customary barriers to communication
  • Problems related to gender imbalance and interaction
  • Education which is teacher-centred and not measured by student success
  • Delivery problems linked to basic needs such as food and electricity.

**Universal Access to Information and Knowledge**

40. The PFNet Project: Donald Malasa, Secretary-General of the Solomon Islands National Commission

40. Mr Malasa presented the People’s First Network (PFNet) project, which uses ICT to help rural communities. The project, established by UNDP, networks rural communities with the outside world through the use of basic and sustainable e-
mail access. The aim of the project is to facilitate affordable communication access to facilitate information sharing and networking across society. Over the last 2½ years, solar power, creative bandwidth management and basic HF band networks have enabled the establishment of 14 e-mail stations. Another 10 stations are planned for this year, thus allowing the project to be applied to E-learning, community networking, disaster management and many others.

Access to Quality Education for All

- Access to Quality Education for All: Seyed Mohammad Tavakol Kosari, Secretary-General of the Iranian National Commission

41. This presentation focused on the ways ICT can be used to benefit education in Iran at all levels from primary, through secondary to higher learning. In primary and secondary education, school networks are used for student enrolment, the purchase of books and supplies, teacher collaboration, salary payments and reporting. Six of the 30 provinces are currently networked, and Iran hopes to have all 15,000 schools linked by 2006. In higher education, virtual university development is a priority. 20 virtual universities were commissioned and three are active at the present time. A project is also under way to establish a network of virtual universities.

42. A short video clip on a Cambodia project was played for the meeting, to showcase an Electronic Pony Express System used for remote villages. E-mails are transferred out of remote villages without phone lines or electricity by using mobile computers on motorbikes with wireless data connections. These can transfer e-mails from schools to Internet hubs in the city. In conclusion, Theany Tan, Secretary-General of the National Commission of Cambodia, expressed her hope that UNESCO would continue support for such projects.

- Schoolnets in China: Xiaogong Tian, Secretary-General of the Chinese National Commission

43. A brief overview was given on developments in China, which faces a unique issue of scale. 'Schoolnets' linking schools to the Internet are now being established nationwide. A new rural community strategy was launched with a pilot project in 2003. As a result, Rural Community Internet Centres are currently being set up to promote vocational education, cultural activities and information exchange.

Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

- The Digital Silk Road Project: Hiroshi Nagano, Secretary-General of the Japanese National Commission

44. This project is led by the National Information Institution in Japan, with UNESCO support. The project’s mission was to develop cultural heritage resource for future generations using ICT to preserve cultural and natural heritage images. Mr Nagano commented that the world can lose cultural heritage through the unfortunate intentional destruction of heritage material and its history, which fades with time. International Research Institutes collaborated to create an ‘imaginary’ museum of images on the Internet along with the collection of digital heritage information. Access to heritage and its preservation through ICTs can help to promote better awareness amongst the general public, as is the case in this project.
Concluding Statement on Information Societies

45. Laurence Zwimpfer then invited speakers and delegates to contribute brief personal statements and thoughts on how they see priorities for the future in this area.

46. The comments contributed were as follows:

- “Use of ICT for training is key’
- “Access to internet and ICT enhanced learning in all schools”.
- “Improve IT networks using a common platform for all Member States.”
- “Dreams of a knowledge society require the sun, a bike and creativity’
- “Freedom of opinion and expression is a process of human dignity”
- “To be creative, use ICTs, not be used by them.”
- “Use the resources of the Information Society for sustainable development.”
- “A combination of government commitment and fair competition in the private sector is a key to the realization of the potential of ICTs for transparency, accountability and empowerment.”
- “UNESCO as a knowledge broker for utilizing ICTs for development.”

Session Three

Sustainability and Creativity – an Open Forum

Session Three - Sustainability and Creativity: An Open Forum

47. Mr Arief Rachman, Executive Chairman of the Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO, presided at this session. In his opening remarks, he noted that sustainability and creativity go hand in hand when solutions to development issues are being sought. There should be alternative delivery systems to deal with poverty and to reach the unreached, and these should help set clearer goals for sustainability, and creativity through better communication.

48. The participants agreed to include technical and vocational education and values in education as crucial aspects for sustainable development, the principles of which emanated from the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro over a decade ago. There are a complex set of objectives, which include respect for human rights. There is the key role for education and its associated cultural values in meeting this challenge:

- Education for sustainability cannot be achieved without quality training and delivery systems.
- The quality of teachers is related, inter alia, to the education and training they receive, their qualifications, the ways in which their attitudes and competencies are nurtured, government recruitment policies, career prospects and their status and recognition.
- Regarding delivery systems, countries may have to choose between traditional and more modern ICT–based techniques. Studies have indicated that many teachers still use traditional methods such as “the chalk and talk methods” which have a negative impact on students interest in subjects, their understanding and consequently, on achievement.

49. On the other hand, studies have indicated that hands-on activities based on learning and co-operative learning provide more meaningful modes of learning for students. It must therefore ensure that teachers are able to cultivate the right interests and understanding among students in the ASPAC region. In this regard,
the use of more modern teaching modalities, particularly through the use of interactive media and ICT, should be encouraged.

50. Concerning the link between development and education, the school principal should be solely responsible for curriculum matters, and not be completely occupied with administrative issues. Mr Lynn Bublitz, former Principal of a Taranaki High School, New Zealand, commented that it is important to mentor new principals. There should be a special focus on curriculum leadership, which could also include the use of ICTs and the resources, which UNESCO can provide, including those available on Internet. Administration is important but needs to be properly balanced with the real mission of education. Moreover, ethics need to come from both schools and parents. As the new “Renaissance Man” needs to be properly equipped to cope with a wide range of demands in today’s society.

51. Finally, it was agreed that translating the principles of sustainable development into truly operational concepts and determining how these can be effectively measured are difficult tasks.

Science for Sustainable Development

52. Mr Ian Anderson of the Australian Delegation outlined various initiatives currently being undertaken in Australia, including the establishment of the Nature and Society Forum, an NGO based in Canberra, and a Centre for Sustainability. Canberra has also been proposed as a Biosphere Reserve, with a human health dimension. Related energy factors such as the use of solar energy, steam generation using hot rocks, wind generators, passive solar design, and the importance of water and proper waste management. Natural disasters such as bushfires add a special challenge for this initiative.

53. Energy is generally vitally important for Member States in Asia, due to their rapid economic growth rates. Consequently, there is a need to better promote the use of sustainable energy. It was recommended that UNESCO should take quick action to mobilize governments. To this end, the need for awareness-raising initiatives was emphasized. Energy education, relevant technologies, and issues concerning the ethics of energy also merit attention.

54. Other proposals included the establishment of a Centre on Eco-hydrology for Science and Technology, specific to the environment of the region was proposed. Furthermore, research is needed for small island states to monitor their needs and the use of available resources.

55. Inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary approaches are important, especially at the school level. The principles of sustainable development should be included in school curricula, given the need to build the right qualities of the “mind and heart” so as to learn to live together in greater harmony.

56. A number of other country examples were cited, inter alia;

57. Centres for Seismic Research and Climate Change were being established in India. It should be noted that the ancient literature of this country is replete with references to nature and these should be more widely disseminated.

58. The Philippines has had a research centre on sustainability issues for 38 years and this could help disseminate relevant information.

59. Uzbekistan had separate Deputy Principals whose role is to look after ethical issues.
60. Sustainability should be grounded in values. Education comes not only from science, but also from the home and from traditional knowledge, particularly from the indigenous people. In New Zealand and in addition to national indicators, the Resource Management Act includes the Maori Environmental Performance Development Indicators, which use Maori values.

61. In the Republic of Korea, the APCEIU runs workshops on ethics training, inter-cultural dialogue, human rights education, and sustainable development. Numerous definitions are used for sustainable development and many of the components cited are essential for progress in this domain.

62. Discussions on sustainable development can be confusing because this concept is often taken to mean the environment alone. In fact, sustainable development has three aspects of special note: economic development, justice and environmental development. Economic development often leaves a gap between the rich and poor, fails to protect the environment and takes no account of the lost cultures of indigenous people. To counterbalance this disturbing trend, education must seek to inculcate ethical attitudes and spiritual dimensions in the minds of learners.

63. During this debate, the participants referred to a proposal for consultation on environmental education in schools from the ASPAC region. It was felt that this should be a proposal for global as well as regional consideration, in view of the cultural diversity in all parts of the world today.

64. With regard to UNESCO’s programmes, ASPNet schools should take an active role in promoting environmental education, peace education and values and health education.

Integrating Cultural Diversity, Media and Creativity

65. Intangible cultural heritage is very important in the Asia-Pacific region. Once sites are listed, this leads to global recognition and to the promotion of useful dialogue with relevant partners. It was noted that Japan, whose law on the protection of cultural heritage dates from 1950, is considering ratification of the UNESCO Convention in this domain.

66. Heritage legislation is increasingly important for many countries. For example, New Zealand’s Resource Management Act has three sections dedicated to ensuring that cultural considerations are taken into account when new development is undertaken.

67. World Heritage should also incorporate the concept of creativity. This can be assured by promoting the regular exchange of innovative country experiences and through heritage education.

Sustainability and Creativity

68. Various challenges face the Asia/Pacific region in order to ensure a safe environment and peaceful communities. These include the inadequate quality of human resources, the lack of management skills and financial resources, environmental degradation, and conflicts. To address these issues, creative solutions are definitely required. These emanate from creative minds whose education has included a proper understanding of sustainability, thereby confirming that human behaviour plays a key role in promoting this concept.

69. Education for sustainable development, which involves a life long learning approach, should seek to promote both environmental protection as well as human security. UNESCO, with its goal of achieving Peace and Human Development has emphasized that human security and poverty alleviation are
inconceivable without sustainable development. For this reason, UNESCO programmes in all its fields of competence, must aim to include a sustainable development component. Examples are as follows:

- **Educating for sustainability**, includes both formal and non-formal education, alternative delivery systems to reach the disadvantaged, and training and capacity building in fields related to sustainable development.

- **Science for sustainable development**, includes the promotion of multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary approaches involving the natural as well as social and human sciences with wise use of natural resources, and an improved understanding of human environment relationships.

- **Ethical principles and guidelines** for sustainable development, include the promotion of principles, policies and ethical norms to guide scientific and technological development that is sustainable.

- **Integrating culture**, cultural diversity and the world heritage are key dimensions of activities aimed at sustainable development

- Contributing to wider awareness and understanding of sustainable development can be achieved through the **media and information and communication technologies (ICTs)**.

**Session Four**

**Capacity-building**

**National Commissions for UNESCO: Perspectives for 2004-2005 and Beyond**

70. Ms Mary-Louise Kearney, Director of the Division of Relations with National Commissions and New Partnerships, presented the objectives and results for 2001-2003 and the outlook for 2004-2005 and the near future. She emphasized the United Nations (UN) reform action, especially the 1999 Global Compact, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, and the pursuit of more extensive relations with civil society. With regard to UNESCO, she underscored the reform consisting of a greater concentration of the UNESCO Programme, decentralization, new structure and rotation of staff members and promotion of alliances with civil society. Third, she raised the importance of training National Commissions’ staff and of UNESCO’s investment in this area. Special mention was made of the need to promote innovative training action that makes optimal use of the expertise and experience of Secretaries General. In this regard, pilot projects took place in late 2003, carried out by Dominica, France, New Zealand and Slovenia. Their positive results will be shared amongst all National Commission; further replication is desirable. With regard to the next stages, starting in 2004-2005, Ms Kearney referred to:

- The status of National Commissions in their Member States
- The desirability of promoting exchanges among National Commissions
- The participation of their experienced staff members in capacity-building
- The new role to be played by the National Commissions in planning and execution of the UNESCO Programmes
- The pursuit of partnerships with civil society

71. Finally, she made additional comments on the particular challenges facing National Commissions, notably on the status given to these bodies by their governments and their autonomy to dialogue with civil society. Solid support from governments and from UNESCO are required to ensure the optimal performance of this unique network which plays a key role in assuring UNESCO’s visibility and in the management of its activities in all regions. She recalled the existence of
Draft Guidelines on relations with the Field Offices, drawn up by a group of National Commissions and Field Offices. Comments from all National Commissions were invited to improve this Draft. Lastly Ms Kearney insisted on the importance of adequate staffing and operating resources for National Commissions, including Internet connectivity and the availability of new information and communication technologies.

72. Mr Xiaolin Cheng, Programme Specialist, UNESCO Section for National Commissions, further elaborated on the need for the capacity-building of National Commissions by saying that the uniqueness of the National Commissions depends on their ability to effectively assume the special functions and responsibilities assigned to them. In the present and rapidly evolving context at international and national levels as well as within UNESCO, National Commissions feel a growing need to strengthen themselves to meet challenges and better perform their duties. As recalled in the Director-General’s Circular Letters issued in August 2001 and July 2003 (CL/3599 and CL/3679), it is the shared responsibilities of Member States and UNESCO to enhance their capacities.

73. As for the training programme developed over the last three years for National Commissions’ staff, special attention has been given to project elaboration and management, media relations and partnerships. Recent stimulating exercises were appreciated by and beneficial to participants from the region and had included the direct involvement of local news pagers and TV networks. Techniques have been learnt how to reach these partners so as to better disseminate messages and raise the awareness of UNESCO and National Commissions at country and regional levels. Cooperation will be strengthened with National Commissions and Field Offices concerned in future to pursue this effort with new focus and input to be identified throughout this conference.

74. Comments on the empowerment and sustainability of National Commissions were made during the discussion. An overall assessment of training activities was requested to further improve their relevance and effect. As suggested, aspects relating to synergy between UNESCO Headquarters and Field Offices, the role of National Commissions in a decentralized context, management skills and project monitoring, relations with ministries, working with partners and focal points, enhancing cooperation among National Commissions, mobilizing funding resources, advocacy and visibility of UNESCO and National Commissions could be amongst topics to be included in future training events.

75. Some 15 National Commission posed questions related to aspects of status, capacity-building, their role in the communication strategy of UNESCO and the optimal use of the Participation Programme. Given the range and complexity of these questions, it was agreed that the UNESCO Secretariat, notably the ERC/NCP Division, would provide a detailed reply in writing after the conference.

Education of Young Leaders and Entrepreneurs *

76. Ms Karyn Fenton, of the New Zealand Chapter of the Junior Chamber International (JCI), provided a presentation to the conference participants as part of the current efforts to strengthen co-operation between JCI and UNESCO. JCI, an NGO in official relations with UNESCO has chapters in over 100 countries and seeks to link more actively with UNESCO’s network of 190 National Commissions. The JCI is a federation of young professionals and entrepreneurs who help young people to learn how to be better leaders through social involvement. The JCI runs a number of innovative professional and community projects including the JCI University and support to the Small Business sector. National Commissions and JCI country chapters are being invited to partner at grass roots level as part of outreach activities with the local private sector. To
this end, a Letter of Encouragement, to be co-signed by the President of JCI and the Director-General of UNESCO, is being prepared to facilitate contacts.

Presentation of the SHS Sector *
Mr Chaibong Hahm, Director, Division of Social Science Policy, Social and Human Sciences Sector

77. The main orientations and programmes of the SHS Sector were presented to the participants, including action to promote ethics, human rights, poverty reduction and social transformation. Particular emphasis was given to activating National Commissions and their academic excellence in the planning and implementation of these programmes given that the SHS Sector fully appreciates the wealth of expertise to be found in the academic partners mobilized by National Commissions as part of their outreach function.

78. National Commissions are encouraged to pursue this co-operation and to interact with the SHS programme to address the priorities of the ASPAC region where development issues are both numerous and complex.

Presentation of the Bureau of Human Resources Management *
Ms Dyane Dufresne-Klaus, Director, Bureau of Human Resources Management

79. This presentation updated the participants on the main aspects of UNESCO’s new Human Resources policy including recruitment, performance assessment, training and rotation. Current changes are profound and are designed to better serve the growing needs of Member States through the assignment of staff who have a broad knowledge of UNESCO’s programme areas and who have acquired experience both in Headquarters and in the field.

80. In particular, recruitment from under represented and non represented Member States constitutes a major priority for the Director-General in order to assure the universality of the staff. For this reason, the Bureau of Human Resources Management wishes to make sure that National Commissions are closely associated with efforts to recruit skilled personnel from these countries.

Closing Session

81. The Quadrennial Conference ended with participants expressing their warm thanks to the New Zealand National Commission and to UNESCO for hosting and organizing this activity.

Note: Main Keynote Addresses and Powerpoint Presentations

82. These documents are indicated by an asterisk * and were distributed to participants at the conference. They are also available in E-version on request from the ERC/NCP Division UNESCO. Please contact Lauren Magnan (l.magnan@unesco.org).

The list is as follows:

Session 1
Professor Zakri, IAS/UNU, Mr Potter, Office of the Environmental Commissioner, Ms Taniguchi, UNESCO Office, Teheran

Session II
Mr Zwimpfer, New Zealand National Commission, Mr Plathe, CI Sector/UNESCO

Session IV
Miss Kearney, ERC/NCP, UNESCO, Ms Fenton, Junior Chamber of Commerce, New Zealand, Mr Hahm, SHS Sector, UNESCO, Ms Dufresne-Klaus, HRM, UNESCO
Annex

13th Quadrennial and Statutory Regional Conference of National Commissions for UNESCO of the Asia and Pacific

Wellington, New Zealand 23-27 May 2004

Recommendations

1. Education for Sustainable Development be designated an intersectoral programme with emphasis on traditional knowledge ethical considerations and use of ICT in order to lead to self-sustaining creative societies.